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Public Participation through Restoration Advisory Boards

Former Pinecastle Jeep Range
Orlando, Florida

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What is a RAB?

- A forum comprised of representatives of:
  - Federal, state, local and tribal governments
  - Affected community
- Represents diverse interests
- Focused on environmental restoration issues

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Purpose

- Establishes two-way dialogue – forum for discussion and exchange of information between agencies and community
- Provides stakeholders the opportunity to participate in restoration process
- Reviews progress and participates in dialogue with program decision makers

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Responsibilities

- Serve on voluntary basis
- Attend regular meetings
- Advise government decision makers
- Discuss and exchange information
- Review plans and reports
- Identify proposed project requirements
- Complement other community involvement initiatives

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Diverse Membership

- **Government representation:**
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - Florida Department of Environmental Protection
  - Orange County
  - City of Orlando
- **Community representation:**
  - Property owners
  - Business owners
  - Health and safety professionals
  - Education professionals
  - Clergy
  - Interested citizens
  - Environmental groups

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Process

- Community expression of interest
- Public meeting to introduce / discuss RAB concept
- Convene selection panel of trusted community leaders
- Solicit applications from community
- Selection panel recommends RAB members
- Corps and partners review and accept members
- Selection panel disbanded and RAB schedules first meeting

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RAB Leadership

- Co-chairs (one named by government; one elected by RAB community members)
  - Equal partnership and empowerment
  - Collaborate on agenda
  - Ensure that all members have opportunity to participate
  - Ensure that community issues and concerns are brought to the table
  - Ensure timeliness of review and actions

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RAB Membership

- Shared goals
- Open and honest communication
- Large enough to represent diverse interests
- Small enough to be workable
- Committed to participating in good faith
- Committed to building consensus and trust
- Serve as conduit for flow of information to and from the community

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Technical Assistance for Public Participation (TAPP)

- **Independent technical support to RAB**
  - **Interpret scientific and engineering issues**
  - **Focus on environmental hazards and restoration activities**

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Technical Assistance for Public Participation (TAPP)

- **Contributes to:**
  - **Efficiency, effectiveness, timeliness of restoration activities**
  - **Community acceptance of restoration activities**
- **Must follow specific process and eligibility criteria**

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Questions / Comments